UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/C.2/52/5
22 October 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/SPANISH

Fifty-second session
SECOND COMMITTEE
Agenda item 12

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Letter dated 21 October 1997 from the Acting President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Second Committee

I have the honour to enclose, for appropriate action by your Committee, a letter dated 29 September 1997 addressed to me by the President of the Economic and Social Council, to which is attached a letter dated 22 August 1997 addressed to the President of the Council concerning the graduation of Vanuatu to non-least developing country status.

(Signed) Manual TELLO
Acting President

97-28175 (E) 241097 251097

/...

Annex

LETTER DATED 29 SEPTEMBER 1997 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

I am enclosing a copy of a letter dated 22 August 1997 regarding the graduation of Vanuatu to non-least developing country status, which was addressed to the President of the Economic and Social Council from the Prime Minister of Vanuatu.

At its 34th plenary meeting, on 18 July 1997, the Council adopted decision 1997/223 in which the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee for Development Planning on its thirty-first session concerning the list of least developed countries were endorsed. In paragraph (a) of that decision the Council recommended that "Vanuatu be graduated from the list with immediate effect".

You may wish to bring this matter to the attention of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Vladimir GALUSKA

Appendix

LETTER DATED 22 AUGUST 1997 FROM THE PRIME MINISTER OF VANUATU TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Re: Proposed graduation of Vanuatu to non-least developed country status

My Government notes with concern the proposal by the Committee on Development Planning, following its triennial review at its 1997 session, to have Vanuatu graduate out of the list of least developing countries.

My Government urges the Economic and Social Council to defer the review by the Committee of the status of Vanuatu as a least developed country until the year 2000. The following reasons are advanced in support of our position on this matter:

We have serious doubts about the quality of the statistics used for the exercise.

We have had no technical inputs into the computation exercise, neither were we invited to make observations upon the qualitative judgements which had to be made in the face of inadequacies with regard to available statistics and the set of indicators employed.

We are, as part of our recently finalized comprehensive reform programme, focusing upon domestic capacity strengthening in all sectors including that within the Statistics Office. The latter will result in improved sets of statistical series, including those such as GDP and GNP and sectoral shares, life expectancy, mortality, literacy, energy consumption, primary and secondary school enrolment, sectoral employment, export concentration and caloric intakes, which are needed for a fair assessment of our position as a member of the group of least developed countries. Given expected further improvement and refinement in these statistics and our wish to participate fully and constructively with the Committee, we believe, as mentioned above, that such an assessment should be deferred and undertaken in the year 2000 when confidence in the quality of the exercise by all parties, including ourselves, is likely to be at a higher level.

I look forward to your favourable and sympathetic response to the above proposal.

(Signed) Honourable RIALUTH Serge Vohor
Prime Minister